

## The two-way street

Margaret Beaton 07 November 2011

I was interested to read in the Harvard Business Review last month an article entitled “[The relationship you need to get right](#)” (HBR, Oct 2011) – all about how the relationship between sponsor and protégé works best when it helps both parties.

As you can read in my previous post on this blog, “[Making the master-apprentice model work for you](#)”, I 100% agree. The authors even use the same words as I did: “a two-way street”.

### And their research backs it up:

“We conducted three national surveys of nearly 4,000 professionals in large corporations, held focus groups with more than 60 vice presidents and senior vice presidents, and interviewed nearly 20 Fortune 500 executives. The best sponsors, we found, go beyond mentoring. They offer not just guidance but also advocacy, not just vision but also the tactical means of realizing it. They place bets on outstanding junior colleagues and call in favors for them. The most successful protégés, for their part, recognize that sponsorship must be earned with performance and loyalty—not just once but continually.”

It’s clearly a hot topic at the moment, and a real way for professionals to give an edge to their career. So I ask again: *Have you ever thought of yourself as a master? Or an apprentice?* Because if you’re not exploring this in your career already, now’s the time to start.

*This post was written by Dr [Margaret Beaton](#), a director of [Beaton Executive Coaching](#) and [Beaton Research + Consulting](#). You can also find Margaret on [LinkedIn](#).*